

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN PORTFOLIO FOR STUDENT TEACHERS  
OF LANGUAGES AS A SELF ASSESSMENT GUIDE IN A PRE SERVICE ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM**

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LICENCIATURA EN BILINGÜISMO CON ÉNFASIS EN INGLÉS**

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Trabajo de grado presentado como requisito para obtener el título de Licenciado  
en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en Inglés

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## **2. Abstract**

The project EPOSTL, European portfolio for future teachers of languages, it is a document designed by the European Centre for modern languages of the Council of Europe. The aim of this document is to make future language teachers reflect on their performance during their teaching experience. The document consists of a personal statement, a self-assessment, a dossier, a glossary, an index and a user's 'guide. The self-assessment contains "can- do" descriptors related to different teaching situations such as educational context, methodology, resources, etc. These descriptors represent the competences that teachers should develop during their teaching career. The descriptors were answered in approximately a month, and they helped me to evaluate my progress as educator and the aspects that I should improve in second language teaching.

## 2.1 Resumen

El proyecto EPOSTL, portafolio europeo para futuros docentes de lenguas, es un documento diseñado por el Centro Europeo de Lenguas Modernas del Consejo de Europa con el fin de hacer que los futuros profesores de enseñanza de idiomas reflexionen sobre su desempeño como docentes. El documento consta de una declaración personal, una sección de auto-evaluación, un dossier, un glosario, un índice y una guía de utilización. La auto-evaluación es la parte esencial del documento y está conformada por 193 descriptores “sé o puedo hacer” los cuales representan las competencias necesarias que un profesor debe desarrollar durante su carrera docente. Los descriptores se contestaron aproximadamente en un mes, y me sirvieron para reflexionar sobre mi experiencia docente y los aspectos que debo mejorar en la enseñanza de una segunda lengua.

### **3. Rationale**

The European Portfolio for Student teachers of Languages, EPOSTL, is a document created by the Council of Europe with the purpose of helping student teachers to reflect on their pedagogical activity. According to Newby et al, (2007), the EPOSTL is an instrument aimed at promoting reflection on the student teachers' didactic knowledge and skills in teaching languages. Also, it helps them to check their progress and to record their experiences during their teaching performance. (p.5). The EPOSTL contains six sections: a personal statement, a self-evaluation, a dossier, a glossary, an index, and a user's guide.

The personal statement poses some questions that lead student teachers to reflect on general issues at the beginning of their teaching education. For instance, I reflected on my expectations before starting my degree. Furthermore, I thought about which aspects of teaching are most relevant to put into practice regarding my experience as language learner.

The self -assessment, which is the core of the project, contains 193 can-do descriptors related to several areas of teaching language such as context, methodology, resources, lesson planning, etc. Each descriptor has to be turned into question form. Therefore, I answered them and I provided examples to support my answers based on the situations that I experienced as teacher during my pedagogical practicum. In addition, I had to include some author's views to broaden my answers.

The main difficulty when I did the self-assessment was my lack of experience in second language teaching ,So I could not claim to have the enough competences related to all the situations described in the descriptors. Newby et al (2007), state that “Other descriptors might be needed for other contexts; for example, for primary school teachers (i.e. young learners), for CLIL, for adult education etc). (p.85). Consequently, I would respond by saying how I would hypothetically deal with the pedagogical situations in question, and I would support my answers by providing examples or quoting scholars’ views.

#### 4. Objectives

- To encourage student teachers to reflect on the required competences and knowledge that educators need to develop in language teaching.
- To prepare future language instructors in different contexts and situations of teaching.
- To foster discussion between me and my peers and between me and my mentors.
- To help me in the self assessment of my growing competences as a language teacher.
- To use the EPOSTL as a means to check and evaluate my progress as language instructor.
- To reflect on language teaching theories and to what extent I can apply them in the classroom.
- To think about the importance of adapting materials and resources depending on the needs and characteristics of the learners.
- To reflect on the requirements set in national and local curriculums.



## 5. Descriptors

### 5.1. Personal statement

1. As learners of language in school, you already have had a lot of contact with teaching. What aspects – teacher's qualities, practices etc. – of your own language teaching might influence how you wish or do not wish to teach?

#### Experiences of being taught

##### Positive

When I took English classes in school and other institutions involved in EFL teaching, the teachers tried to create a relaxed environment for the students to learn better. So, I would like to put into practice that in teaching. I should ensure that the students do not feel intimidated, and tell them that making mistakes is normal during the learning process. Therefore, I would not reprimand them; instead, I would encourage them to take risk to participate in class.

##### Negative

Most of the teachers who taught me in high school were too adhered to grammar. They did not care about getting the learners to practice language for realistic situations. Consequently, I would plan the classes based on the communicative approach and promote activities in which learners can develop the four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing.

2. a) what aspects of teaching are you most looking forward to?

I want to have a rapport with the learners. To achieve this purpose, It is essential to create a good environment for learning and promote respect in the classroom. A relaxing setting will help students to reduce their affective filter, and, in this way, they will

want to participate in the classes. In addition, I am in favor of learner-centered classes which are aimed at getting the pupils to learn actively instead of being recipients of information. I would design activities whereby students practice language for real life through activities like role-plays, games, discussion, etc.

b) What aspects of teaching are you least looking forward to?

I do not agree with teacher-centered classes because students become dependent learners. Also, I should avoid following coursebooks without adapting their content to the needs and language proficiency level of the students. Finally, I have to prevent students from translating from L2 to L1 because it could cause interference in their learning process.

3. Expectations of your teacher education course.

a) What do you expect most from your teacher education?

I expect to acquire the required training in order to successfully manage the difficult aspects of teaching.

b) What do you want most from your teacher education?

I want to develop enough skills and knowledge to fulfill the needs of any school that requires my service.

c) What do you think that your teacher educators expect from you?

I think that my teacher educators expect that I can put into practice what I learned during my degree and assume different roles as a teacher, e.g. controller, organizer, assessor, motivator, etc. Teachers need to adapt their way of teaching to the context and student's needs.

4. How important do you consider the following for a language teacher. Add your own ideas, discuss with a partner and give reasons for your choices. How important?

a) Cooperating with others. It is important for teachers to collect information from other people such as colleagues, students, parents, etc.

b) Good organizational skills. Educators need to apply this ability in the classrooms when grouping learners, assigning tasks and controlling discipline.

c) Being able to explain grammar. Grammar is an important aspect of language since it provides a better understanding of its structure.

d) Using teaching materials: Teachers should use aids for teaching like flashcards, realia, ICT's for education, textbooks, etc. These resources facilitate the study of language and draw attention of learners.

e) Motivating students: One of the most important roles in teaching language is to motivate learners by showing them what the advantages of studying a second language are. e. g, economical benefits, knowledge improvement, etc.

f) Classroom management. It is fundamental for educators to get learners to focus on the classes. Teachers need to have a balance between authority and flexibility in order to have a rapport with the students and avoid that the classes get out of control.

g) Using authentic materials. It is important that teachers use materials like newspapers articles, magazines, advertisement. These resources are suitable for advanced learners, and help them learn realistic language.

h) Teaching content classes. Content-based instruction is very productive for learners since they can study other themes and learn a lot of target language. Students may be more motivated to learn certain subject matters through the second language for a different purpose than focusing only on language.

I) Providing feedback to students. Feedback is very important in teaching. Teachers should make sure that their pupils are conscious of their learning process and make students know their strengths and the aspects to improve.

J) Evaluation: The educators should evaluate constantly the learning process, and adapt their way of teaching to the needs and characteristics of the students. Evaluation is important for decision making in teaching.

## **5.2 Self – Assessment**

### **5.2.1 Context**

#### **A. Curriculum**

##### **1. Can I understand the requirements set in national and local curricula?**

Yes, I can. They represent a guideline for teachers in order to know the content to teach, the resources to be used, and the goals of each course. Also, these educative regulations set the bases for teachers to evaluate students' learning and their performance based on their age, cognitive skills, English proficiency level, etc. It is important that there is a continuous communication between the teachers and the directors of the institutions with the purpose of evaluating these curricula, identifying some weaknesses, and making some changes if needed.

##### **2. Can I design language courses around the national and local curriculum?**

Yes, I can. Once I know the curriculum aims, it is easier for me to plan and design courses oriented to meet those goals. In this way, I can implement in the classroom what the curriculum demands, and, at the same, time, I should adapt the educational program to the students' needs and to the learning context. Also, I have to get a balance between what is aimed in the curriculum and what can be achieved in reality. "Curriculum is often developed in advance, but students' and teachers' interactions with this material comprise the enacted- which is to say, the actual or effective- curriculum" (Cohen and Balls, 1999, as cited in Shawer, Gilmore & Banks-Joseph, 2009, P. 125).

3. Can I understand the principles formulated in relevant European documents? (e.g. Common European Framework of Reference, European language Portfolio).

Yes, I can. These texts are very useful for English language teachers because they help them to have a clear view of the students' learning process. They facilitate educators to identify the learners' strengths and weaknesses, their progress, and what they need to improve during the different learning stages which they have to go through. Thus, these documents are important pedagogical tools for educators since they support their teaching activity and help them to anticipate problems that can appear in the learning setting.

4. Can I understand and integrate content of European documents (e.g. Common European Framework of Reference, European Language Portfolio) as appropriate in my teaching?

Yes, I can. These booklets are very useful for English language educators in lesson planning and the design of the classes. They help both practitioners and in-service teachers to identify the achievement indicator of the students which is essential to evaluate how the learners' learning process is resulting. The descriptors included in these documents represent a guideline for ESL instructors to identify if the students are doing well or they need more work and feedback.

## B. Aims and Needs

1. Can I understand the personal, intellectual and cultural value of learning other languages?

Yes, I can. Learning other languages contributes not only to develop the individuals' ability to communicate with other people around the world, but also it permits them to enhance their cognitive skills and acquire awareness of the society in which we live. When teaching a second language I should tell the learners the importance of identifying the aspects that characterize the culture of the target language. Most of the scholars, which I have had the opportunity to study through my degree, consider that second language learning is not an isolated element, but it is affected by sociocultural factors. Concerning this idea, Piasecka (2011) claims that "sensitizing language learners to cultural diversity affects their linguistic repertoire for expressing and making sense of meanings they encounter in diverse communicative situations". (p.22)

2. Can I take account of overall, long-term aims based on needs and expectations?

Yes, I can. Following these aims is important because it provides direction and meaning to the teaching activity. When I teach a second language knowing beforehand what the goals are, I need to develop strategies that lead to fulfilling those aims based on needs. For example, when teaching English to students who belong a low-class stratum in Colombia I have to adapt the content of the course to their cultural level and topic of interest, let's say, introducing a football player that they know in order to teach the verb *to be* and the present simple tense, e.g., *He is Juan Cuadrado, he is 28 years old, he plays for the Italian club Juventus*, etc. It is necessary to know the social context and the learners' background before implementing the pedagogical activities that facilitate the learning of the second language. Colombia is not a bilingual country, and the student community is barely becoming familiar with the idea of learning English as a policy of the Ministry of Education. Therefore, teachers should design appealing courses

that ensure the effective learning of the Colombian students who frequently show reluctance to learn other languages. Based on a study carried out in a public school in Colombia, Guzman (2011) states that some students evidence motivation to learn a second language, but they see their learning process as a challenging goal. (p .62)

### 3. Can I take into account differing motivations for learning another language?

Yes, I can. I should take advantage of the learners' motivation for learning English as a second language. EFL teachers not only have the role of facilitating learning, but also they have to be motivators in order to awaken the pupils' attention and keenness to discover new things. Furthermore, it is important that educators promote awareness about learning a second language by showing the benefits since motivation is the springboard to carry out successfully any activity.

### 4. Can I take into account the cognitive needs of learners? (problem solving, drive for communication, acquiring knowledge, etc)

Yes, I can. If I know the learners' needs, I can plan and conduct more effective language classes. I should be conscious about what the students require for learning based on their capacities and individual characteristics. For instance, I should use videos, PowerPoint presentations, and flashcards, etc, for those students who are visual learners. Likewise, I need to use the appropriate resources for aural learners, or the students who enjoy physical tasks, e.g., games, role play, etc. Teachers should interpret the type of learners they teach in order to conduct efficient classes and reach the goals planned.

### 5. Can I take into account the affective needs of learners? (Sense of achievement, enjoyment, etc).



Yes, I can. I think that students learn better when they feel in a relaxing setting. Second language Teachers should provide the conditions to have a good atmosphere for learning by promoting respect inside the classroom. In regard to classroom management, the educator needs to impose his/her authority but not to abuse of it. In my practicum, , I treated the learners with respect, praised them when they did the tasks well, and corrected them moderately when necessary. For example, I used to give “points” to those students who showed keenness to participate in the class.

6. Can I take into account and assess the expectations and impact of educational stakeholders? (employers, parents, funding agencies, etc)

Yes, I can. In general, the people involved in the educational area have a lot of expectations about the youngsters that are receiving bilingual instruction. The Colombian society looks forward to having bilingual individuals with both linguistic and social skills according to the needs of society. The bilingualism in education should provide an integral formation so that people can acquire awareness about the linguistic and cultural diversity all over the world.

7. Can I take into account attainment target levels set in curricula? ( e.g. deriving from the Common European Framework of Reference )

Yes, I can. The attainment target levels are important signals that guide teachers in the learning process of the students. Based on these achievement indicators, I, as a teacher, can perceive both failures and positive aspects that are useful in decision - making. In relation to the students' performance, these attainment indicators lead teachers to correct the learners' weaknesses and redirect their way of learning.

### **C. The role of the language teacher**

1. Can I promote the value and benefits of language learning to learners, parent and others?

Yes, I can. It is important to promote informative talks for students, parents, and other people involved in the learning process, with the purpose of getting them to understand the advantages that learning a second language offers to their lives. For example, to provide better job opportunities, enhance knowledge, improve social skills and create consciousness about the diversity of cultures. Nowadays, the globalized world demands that people speak English because it is the most spoken language for technology, business, diplomacy, tourism, etc.

2. Can I appreciate and make use of the value added to classroom environment by learners with diverse cultural background?

Yes, I can. I should promote respect and tolerance to other cultures and ethnicities. When I am conducting a language class, I should remark that language belongs to people regardless their social condition, race, religion or belief. Language serves as an instrument for communication, unity and solidarity among all the human beings. Indeed, I have to implement activities inside the classroom that help pupils to use language for interaction and acceptance towards their classmates.

3. Can I take into account the knowledge of other languages learners may already possess and help them to build on this knowledge when learning additional languages?

Yes, I can. In the Colombian context, the learners come into the ESL classroom with a lot of skills in their mother tongue. Therefore, I have to take advantage of this prior knowledge and abilities that they already have. For example, I can use Spanish in order to explain or contextualize some tasks. In my practicum, I spoke in Spanish in order to

explain the task before playing the recording. Also, I used pictures to support the instructions. Besides, I used elicitation both in English and In Spanish. For instance, I asked the students in Spanish “¿Como están vestidas las personas en la imagen? ¿Dónde están ellos? ¿Que están haciendo? etc. In doing so, they had a previous idea about the activity.

4. Can I draw on appropriate theories on language, learning, culture, etc and relevant research findings to guide my teaching?

Yes, I can. It is necessary to review these theories since they help me to anticipate different issues that occur during the teaching process. Certainly, the theories about language learning contribute to understand the essential aspects of teaching and to understand my role as instructor. For instance, as a teacher practitioner I put into practice some principles related to the Task-Based Instruction, and Total Physical Response, e.g., mimicry, games, gap - filling activities, coloring, etc.

5. Can I critically assess my teaching on the basis of experience, learner outcomes, and adapt it accordingly?

Yes, I can. Both teaching experience and learner outcomes are valuable information that serves teachers to solve problems and anticipate situations that can occur during the learning process. In addition, the knowledge accumulated throughout the teaching experience helps to shape the beliefs and techniques related to teaching. For instance, during my practicum, I started a course for beginners based on the New Headway textbook. However, the content of the book was based on the British lifestyle, and the learners become confused with the lessons. In consequence, I had to adapt the classes to pupils' culture and language level. Learners' outcomes can guide educators to assess their teaching. Regarding the aforementioned, Brindley (2001) states that “assessment carried out by teachers during the learning process with the aim of using the results to improve instruction is known as formative assessment”. (p.137)

6. Can I critically assess my teaching in relation to theoretical principles?

Yes, I can. Theoretical principles help teachers to reflect on what they do every day in the classroom and about what they need to improve. The theories about language instruction shed light on how educators can become more productive. In addition, the literature about teaching a second language is not only a source of knowledge in terms of methodology, but also it promotes the continuing self-evaluation. Language teaching should be reinvented constantly since it is a dynamic activity rather than a rigid process.

7. Can I accept feedback from my peers and mentors and build this into my teaching?

Yes, I can. Indeed, my peers and mentors' knowledge is a worthy source of information for me to continue growing as professional in the educative field. Taking into account my peers and mentors' experiences can function as a valuable guide for me as a teacher. For example, in my guided teaching practicum, the professor used to give me useful tips, e.g, the importance of using visual aids and body language in SL teaching, the use of CIT's, etc.

8. Can I observe my peers, recognize different methodological aspects of their teaching and offer them constructive feedback?

Yes, I can. Peer feedback is important for professional growth in the educational field. Language instructors should always be willing to receive advice and share experiences relating to second language teaching. For example, a week before starting my guided practicum, I had to observe a partner conducting their English classes in order to evaluate his performance in terms of classroom management, lesson planning, etc.

9. Can I locate relevant articles, journals and research findings relating to aspects of teaching and learning?

Yes, I can. I have downloaded a few documents from internet related to second language teaching For example, *Toward Reflective Teaching* by Jack Richards, *The practice of English Teaching* by Jeremy Harmer, *How to teach grammar* by Thornbury Scott, etc. Definitely, these documents are a valuable source of knowledge for student teachers. The theoretical principles and research findings support language instructors in their practicum.

10. Can I identify and investigate specific pedagogical/didactic issues related to my learners or my teaching in the form of action research?

Yes, I can. Second language teachers should draw on research in order to solve issues that arise frequently in the classroom. For example, teachers usually find several difficulties in terms of classroom management, methodology, assessment, etc. Thus, research helps educators to identify the cause of a particular problem .Likewise; it might provide a wider perspective for teachers to make better decisions.

#### **D. Institutional resources and constraints**

1. Can I assess how I might use the resources available in my school? (OHP, computers, library, etc)

Yes, I can design a lesson depending on the type of resources are available in the school. For instance, the use of technological gadgets such as the overhead projector, computers etc, supports students who learn better with visual aids. It is important to use the teaching material appropriately according to the type of learners, and the purpose of the lessons.

2. Can I recognize the organizational constraints and resource limitations existent at my school and adapt my teaching accordingly?

Yes, I can. The organizational constraints and the resource limitations which exist at my school are essential aspects in the teaching context. Therefore, I have to design appropriate lessons and materials to face the difficult situations that could affect the teaching process. If necessary, I should create my own materials such as flashcards or posters, or taking to the class my technological gadgets in order to facilitate the learning of the students. In relation to the impact of adapting materials in ESL teaching, Crawford (2002) points out that teachers should interpret the context in which learning is taking place, and it is important that they adapt materials to learners' needs and cultural background. (p.87).

### **5.2.2. Methodology**

#### **A. Speaking / spoken interaction**

1. Can I create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities?

Yes, I can. In order to promote participation in speaking activities, I should try to create a relaxing environment to prevent learners from feeling intimidated in the classroom. Most of teachers achieve this purpose through the implementation of game-like activities. In my practicum, I implemented some amusing tasks like lottery, mimicry, guessing, broken phone, drawing, cut and paste, crosswords, alphabet soup, songs, etc. In general, it is easier for students to take part in the class when they find it fun. Games may be a helpful resource to motivate learners to take the risk in speaking activities. According to Brown (2001), "Our jobs as teachers is to provide the kind of warm,

embracing climate that encourages students to speak, however halting or broken their attempts may be".(p.269).

2. Can I evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners of differing abilities to participate?

Yes, I can. I should choose the type of speaking activity based on the age and language level of the learners. For instance, in my practicum, when I taught first graders, I implemented vocabulary tasks appropriate for them. For example, I taught children vocabulary relating to *the family; the human body* and *occupations*. Then, I had the learners speak aloud these words and learning their meaning by means of pictures, games, songs, etc. On the other hand, more complicated tasks like role-play or discussion activities are more suitable for teenagers and adults. Concerning the conditions for discussion tasks:

The level of language needed for a discussion should be lower than that used in intensive – language learning activities in the same class: it should be easily recalled and produced by the participants so that they can speak fluently with the minimum of hesitation. (Ur, 1996, p.122)

3. Can I evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to express their opinions, identity, culture, etc?

Yes, I can promote speaking activities in the classroom about students' identity, and culture. Teachers can start a dialogue (transactional language) with their students with the aim of practicing speaking. Concerning conversation activities, Brown (2001) suggests that "Transactional language carried out for the purpose of conveying or exchanging information is an extended form of responsive language. Conversations, for example, may have more of a negotiative nature to them than does responsive speech." (p. 273) Dialogues not only serve to develop learners' speaking skills but also they may promote reflection about sociocultural aspects. For example, I can promote discussion about how some holidays are celebrated in Colombia in comparison to the English-

speaking countries. Moreover, I can encourage learners to talk about their preferences, e.g., music, food, movies, etc. and how they perceive other cultures.

4. Can I evaluate and select a range of meaningful speaking and interactional activities to develop fluency (discussion, role play, problem solving)?

Yes, I can. Once the learners have received comprehensible input, I can encourage them to develop their oral skills through activities like, conversations, role-plays, discussion, etc. Before assigning tasks I should explain the pupils the purpose of the activities, what they are for. Regarding discussions, ( Lazaraton, 2001, cited by Celce Murcia, 2001) claims that “students need to be clear what they are to discuss, why they are discussing it, and what outcome is expected. In other words, it is insufficient to tell students *Get in groups and discuss this topic*” (p.106).

5. Can I evaluate and select different activities to help learners to become aware of and use different text types? (Telephone conversations, transactions, speeches, etc.)

Yes, I can. It is very important to foster the use of language according to different texts and settings. For instance, I can present the language used in e-mails, job interviews, chats on internet, phone conversations, etc. In my autonomous practicum, I showed to seventh graders different samples of conversations, e.g., greetings, introductions, job interviews, people in a restaurant, etc. I should promote the understanding of the variations of the second language according to the context, the language register, etc.

6. Can I evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate speaking activities? ( visual aids, texts, authentic materials, etc)



Yes, I can. The proper use of the materials can draw the learners' attention and motivate them to participate in discussions, dialogues, etc. For example, in my practicum I had learners watch a video about Mr. Bean performing several daily routines before going to a dentist appointment. So, they had to discuss about what activities he did and which he forgot to do. Based on my experience in the practicum, the effective use of materials like videos, magazines, colorful pictures exerts a powerful effect in the learners by awakening their curiosity for learning. Definitely, I think that these tools can stimulate learners to develop their speaking skills.

7. Can I evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in ongoing spoken exchanges (conversations, transactions, etc) and to respond to utterances appropriately?

Yes, I can. I am able to design activities in order to make use of the learners' skills to interchange their opinions, likes, dislikes about a specific topic. For example, I can implement a pair work activity where learners talk about their favorite food, sports, movies, etc. Likewise, I can organize role plays in which students act out situations about people in a restaurant ordering food, or customers in a store asking information about a particular product.

8. Can I evaluate and select various activities to help learners to identify and use typical features of spoken language (informal language, fillers, etc )

Yes, I can design classes to emphasize the aspects that characterize spoken language. For instance, there are a lot of audiovisual materials whereby teachers can show their students how speakers change their intonation depending on what they want to express in their messages e.g., questions, greetings, sarcasm, etc. Additionally, I should teach my learners that spoken language varies according to formal or informal register. For example, the exclusive use of phrasal verbs in informal conversation like *go out*, *hold on*, etc.

9. Can I help learners to use communication strategies (asking for clarification, comprehension checks, etc) and compensation strategies (paraphrasing, simplification etc) when engaging in spoken interaction?

Yes, I can. In activities for developing speaking skills, it is important that the speakers know how to express themselves by using a varied style of language, and convey the same meaning in different forms. I think that the integration of speaking with other skills is very helpful in order for learners to practice their language skills. For example, I can get the learners to read an article so that they say synonyms of some words found in the reading or have them discuss what the author want to mean in the text.

10. Can I evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of, discriminate and help them to pronounce sounds in the target language?

Yes, I can have students learn about the different sounds of the target language by means of studying its phonetic. Concerning the study of English as a foreign language, I can introduce the learners the different sounds through audio recordings, videos, etc. Once they have learned a few sounds I can design activities in order for them to practice. For instance, in the study of the /P/ sound, some teachers have learners pronounce it by holding a sheet of paper in front of their mouth so that the paper is moved by the air expelled when pronouncing this sound.

11. Can I evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of, and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation?

Yes, I can. There are a lot of material about English phonetics such as textbooks, videos, and websites which explain these aspects of pronunciation. For example, I can show learners the change in intonation depending on whether the utterance is a

question, or an affirmative sentence. In addition, I can teach how the stress of some words change when they are functioning like nouns or verbs, For example, the noun *control* is stressed different to its homonym verb.

12. Can I evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (grammar, word choice, etc)?

Yes, I can. When teaching and assessing speaking activities I should encourage learners to use grammar correctly. For example, I can implement tasks in which learners introduce themselves by using the verb to be, and the present simple. Teachers should promote oral participation inside the classroom as much as possible, and provide feedback when students make mistakes. In so doing, learners develop their speaking skills by means of continuing practice.

## **B. Writing / written interaction**

1. Can I evaluate and select meaningful activities to encourage learners to develop their creative potential?

Yes, I can. By means of creative writing, learners can express their opinions and preferences about topics of their interest. For instance, I can implement tasks in which learners write about their holidays, families, favorite sports, movies, music ,hobbies, etc. According to Hudelson (1989) “By beginning with expressing writing, learners will start with something they know: their experiences and their personal feelings. Encouraging expressive writing will allow learners to share themselves”. (p.51). Regarding creative writing, and in the same tenor as expressed by Hudelson (op.cit) Harmer (2001) points out that “when teachers set up imaginative writing tasks so that their students are thoroughly engaged, those students frequently strive harder than usual to produce a greater variety of correct and appropriate language than they might

for more routine assignments". (p 259). In relation to writing activities in the ESL classroom, Olshtain (2001) states that "In most cases, the audience for these writing tasks is the teacher, but gradually students must learn to write to an unknown reader who needs to get the information being imparted exclusively via writing".(p.213).

2. Can I evaluate and select a range of meaningful writing activities to help learners become aware of and use appropriate language for different text types ( letters, stories, reports, etc )

Yes, I can evaluate and select activities that help learners to develop their writing skills through introducing them different type of texts. For example, I can explain pupils how to type an email by presenting a model and having students practice. Also, I should highlight how the style of language changes depending on what the students are writing. e.g. Academic texts, e-mails, diaries, letters etc.

3. Can I evaluate and select texts in a variety of text types to function as good examples for the learners' writing?

Yes, I can. I am able to select a variety of texts so that the pupils have models for writing. For example, when introducing a letter model, I can show the different parts which a letter is comprised of, e.g., the heading, the greeting, the body, the closing, etc. Likewise, I can provide examples of emails and more complex types of writing such as essays, reports, etc. In relation to writing models:

It is often helpful if students see samples of the kind of texts they are working on. if you offer this as an activity early on in the lesson sequence, it is likely that this sample will be viewed as a kind of model on which to base their own work. The final product may then be substantially similar to the original, especially in layout and organization, but with substitutions of content. (Scrivener, 2005, p.199).

4. Can I evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate writing? (authentic materials, visual aids, etc )

Yes, I can stimulate learners' writing by selecting appropriate materials such as Power Point presentations, videos, pictures, etc. when I was teaching *daily routines* to sixth graders in my practicum, I showed some slides related to this topic in order for the

learners to write short paragraphs about their routines, e.g. *I wake up at 7 am, then I take a shower*, etc. Also, I downloaded videos from internet related to this theme so that they had enough information to write about.

5. Can I evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in written exchanges (emails, job applications, etc) and to initiate or respond to texts appropriately?

Yes, I can. Most of the textbooks offer examples about these written exchanges such as emails, letters, etc; However, I should take these materials and adapt them to the learners' cultural background because the majority of these course books are based on the Anglophone countries lifestyle. For instance, the students can practice by writing letters to friends who live in other Colombian city.

6. Can I help learners to gather or share information for their writing tasks?

Yes, I can. It is important that learners share their works after writing in order to have a constructive and interactive lesson. In my practice, I got the students to work in pairs so that they interview their partners and write about them. Then, they passed in front of the class to share their task with their partners. So, when I gave feedback to each pair, it also serves for the whole group.

7. Can I help learners to plan and structure written tasks? ( e.g. by using mind maps, outlines etc.).

Yes, I can. When I teach writing to ESL intermediate learners, I can suggest that they can brainstorm before writing. Also, I would use slide presentations in order to show the parts which a paragraph is composed of, e.g., topic sentence, supporting and conclusive sentence. The learners should learn to write paragraphs first, and, they will acquire the ability to write more extensive texts progressively.

8. Can I help learners to monitor, reflect on, edit and improve their own writing?

Yes, I can help learners to improve their own writing. I think that I can model examples of compositions by showing those slides, brochures, etc, so that the learners know the structure they need to follow in their writing. Also, It is important to tell the learners that their written works need to be coherent and follow a logical sequence. In addition, each paragraph should include a topic sentence supported with solid arguments and examples. Finally, I can recommend the students to write outlines before writing in order for them to have a clearer view about they want to communicate.

9. Can I use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process?

Yes, I can use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process. For example, I can have students write a short composition about their weekend. Once they finish, they can work in pairs and exchange their texts in order for them correct each other by checking their spelling and grammar mistakes. Peer-assessment is an appropriate activity to support the students' writing process since most of the learners enjoy correcting their partner's errors at the same time they are practicing their writing skills.

10. Can I use a variety of techniques to help learners to develop awareness of the structure, coherence and cohesion of a text and produce texts accordingly?

Yes, I can. I am able to design activities in class aimed at developing awareness of the structure and coherence of written texts. For instance, I can give texts to the pupils which show paragraphs in disorder so that they can order them in a logical sequence. Also, when the learners read a text, they can highlight the topic sentences, the supporting details, etc. Likewise, I can allow learners to use the internet to find exercises related to writing.

11. Can I evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and use spelling patterns and irregular spelling?

Yes, I can teach vocabulary and spelling patterns through flashcards, slides, etc. It is necessary the learners become familiar with the written form of the words when they learn spelling; therefore, I should show the words repeatedly and implement tasks in the classroom for practice, e.g. gap -filling activities, word order exercises, dictation, etc.

12. Can I evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning? ( grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc)

Yes, I can design writing tasks to consolidate writing. For instance, I can show an unpunctuated paragraph and read it out by doing pauses at the end of each sentence. In this way, I help learners to identify the parts of the text in which they must put the commas, periods, etc. In regard to vocabulary learning, I can show the learners a story that takes place in a restaurant so that the students underline all the words related to the topic, e.g. menu, waitress, main course, etc. Afterwards, I can check how the learners spell these words orally.

### **C. Listening**

1. Can I select texts appropriate to the needs, interests, and language level of the learners?

Yes, I can select texts according to the different needs, and learners' language proficiency level. Besides, I should perceive what topics they like most so that they show interest towards the task. For instance, in my practicum with first graders, I selected topics that children could understand easily , e.g, animals, family, jobs, etc. Also, I implemented simple tasks such as coloring, drawing, etc. Regarding my practicum with teenagers, I assigned them more difficult tasks; for example, gap filling exercises based on the information given in a text or a recording. The aforementioned activities correspond to what some scholars call *language use tasks*. According to Moarley, (2001) "The purpose here is to give students practice in listening for information and then immediately doing something" (p.77).

2. Can I provide a range of pre-listening activities which help learners to orientate themselves to a text?

Yes, I can implement pre-listening tasks which facilitate learners to anticipate and become familiar with the topics. For example, before a listening task, I can teach vocabulary by means of flashcards or realia. Also, I can elicit the learners' previous knowledge and predictions about a text by using pictures. Besides, I can provide a reading about the topic and promote discussion before they listen to the text. According to Peterson (2001), "input must be interesting, comprehensible, supported by extra linguistic materials and keyed to the language lesson" (p. 89 ).

3. Can I encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when listening?

Yes, I can elicit the learners in order to determine their previous knowledge about a text before they listen to it. Taking advantage of the learners' previous knowledge is very useful because it prepares their minds for the task. Most of studies related to the development of listening skills in ESL settings suggest that promoting both *Bottom-up* and *Top-down* activities help learners to understand the message they are listening to. Nunan (1991) points out that "Successful listeners and readers are those who can use both 'inside the head' knowledge and 'outside the head' knowledge to interpret what they see and hear." (p.18). In the same fashion, concerning bottom –up and top-down processes, Nation and Newton (2009) suggest that "when we put these types of processing together we see listening not as a single skill, but as a variety of sub skills." (p.40). In my practicum with beginners, I had them listen to several recordings related to greetings and introductions. Before the activity I make them recall the way of greeting studied in previous classes. For example, I told a student: if I say *hello, how are you?* How do you respond? If I say *where are you from?* What do you reply?

4. Can I design and select different activities in order to practice and develop different listening strategies (listening for gist, specific information, etc)?



Yes, I can. A listening task should be developed in several stages. For example, I can play a tape about a conversation in order for the students determine where the dialogue is taking place, what the main idea is about, etc, For instance, I play a recording about a customer ordering a meal in a restaurant, and the learners have to identify the place. Then, I play the audio again, but this time the task is different; the learners have to perform a gap- fill activity by completing the conversation.

5. Can I design and select different activities which help learners to recognize and interpret typical features of spoken language (tone of voice, intonation, style of speaking, etc.)?

Yes, I can because spoken language has several features that written language does not. These characteristics, intonation, pitch, stress, etc, help the speakers to provide meaning to their utterances. For example, I can show my pupils how intonation helps to make distinctions between questions and exclamations, how to turn a statement into a question by changing the pitch from falling into rising. Also, I can highlight the characteristics of the spoken language before or after playing the recording. In relation to teaching listening skills in EFL settings, auditory input has an important role as it is described below:

The most significant contribution of the auditory input to language learning is that it is the only source of data for reconstructing the spoken code of the English language with its distinctive phonemics entities, their rhythm, intonation and other temporal constraints (Dakowska, 2005, p.215).

6. Can I help learners to apply strategies to cope with difficult aspects of spoken language (background noise, redundancy, etc.)?

Yes, I can. Students need to be familiar with the characteristics of the spoken language, e.g., repetitions, fillers, background noise, etc. There are some principles that listening tasks need to fulfill. First of all, the teacher should check the cd's before playing them in order that they do not present technical problems during the playing. The audio has to be audible for all the class. Second, the facilitator should implement pre-listening tasks aimed at preparing the learners before the activity, For instance,

showing them pictures, teaching vocabulary, discussing the topic, etc. Also, the teacher has to encourage learners to answer questions related to the content of the text, not only the language. Summarizing, the listening task should be a sequence of activities with a specific goal for each stage.

7. Can I help learners to apply strategies to cope with difficult or unknown vocabulary of a text?

Yes, I can. At the pre-listening stage, I can teach the written form of the unknown vocabulary and its corresponding pronunciation. I can show pictures for concrete words like cat, book, pencil, etc, and use body language for explaining action verbs. The use of gestures is fun and catches the learners' attention. Also, I can employ synonyms, or use words that they already know. Finally, I can use the students' L1 if necessary.

8. Can I evaluate and select a variety of post-listening tasks to provide a bridge between listening and other skills?

Yes, I can evaluate and select a variety of post-listening tasks in order for the learners to practice other language skills. After the listening task, learners can write a dialogue similar to the one they heard. Then, they can act the story out in order to practice speaking. Also, the learners can solve exercises related to the vocabulary of the text by doing gap-filling activities, image-word matching, etc.

## **D. Reading**

1. Can I select texts appropriate to the needs, interests, and language level of the learners?

Yes, I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners. During my practicum with sixth graders, I implemented intensive reading tasks. I selected short texts and simple topics, e.g., greetings, occupations, hobbies, etc. These reading activities were aimed at studying vocabulary, and the present simple tense. As Renandya and Jacobs (2002) state “the aim of intensive reading is to help students obtain detailed meaning from the text, to develop reading skills such as identifying main ideas and recognizing text connectors- and to enhance vocabulary and grammar knowledge”. (p. 296).

2. Can I provide a range of pre-reading activities to help learners to orientate themselves to a text?

Yes I can. In my practicum, I prepared the students before they read a text. For example, regarding the daily routines, I made a review about the action verbs studied in previous classes, e.g., get up, take a shower, etc. Also, I employed PowerPoint presentation, elicited the learners' knowledge, and had the learners carry out mimicry activities. Additionally, I showed videos related to the topic, and I gave them worksheets. Then, when they had reviewed the topic enough I gave them a short story to read. Concerning pre-reading instruction, Grabe and Stoller (1991) assert that “It helps students’ access background information that can facilitate subsequent reading, provides specific information needed for successful comprehension, stimulates students’ interests, sets up students expectations, and models strategies that students can later use on their own”. (p. 191).

3. Can I encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when reading?

Yes, I can. When I taught beginners in my practicum, I elicited the learners’ knowledge by using pictures. For example before the learners read a story about a nurse, I showed some images and asked the students where nurses work, what they do, etc. In regards to pre-reading tasks:

They are sometimes termed top-down, on the grounds that they give greater emphasis to the kinds of background knowledge and values which the reader brings to reading. The nature of this knowledge can be characterized as “schema”, or mental model, allowing a reader to relate new, text-based knowledge to existing world knowledge. (Wallace, 2001, P.21)

4. Can I apply appropriate ways of reading a text in a class (e.g. aloud, silently, in groups, etc.)?

Yes, I can apply appropriate ways of reading a text in a class. For instance, in my practicum with sixth graders, I provided a text for learners read silently and individually. Afterward, I asked a student to read aloud a part of the story. Then I selected other learner to read other part, and so on. In this way, they practiced pronunciation. Also, I asked questions related to the reading in order to check comprehension. Regarding the use of oral skills to support reading:

When children were allowed ‘to negotiate the meaning’ of an original text they were reading, either through whole class discussion with facilitation by the teacher or with a peer or a different level of language proficiency, they were able to comprehend what they read better than if the text had been simplified for them to read on their own (Vand den Branden, as cited in Ediger, 2001, p.166).

5. Can I set different activities in order to practice and develop different strategies according to the purpose of the reading (skimming, scanning, etc)?

Yes, I can. It is important for ESL teachers to show their pupils some strategies that permit them to develop reading comprehension skills. Regarding reading strategies, Janzen (2002) claims that “they range from bottom-up vocabulary strategies, such as looking up an unknown word in the dictionary, to more comprehensive actions.” (p.287). Likewise, students can use useful strategies like skimming and scanning in order to comprehend the message of a text. According to Asmawati (2015), skimming-scanning

is a speed reading strategy. This strategy has purpose to get the ideas and specific information of the text quickly. (p. 71)

6. Can I help learners to develop different strategies to cope with difficult or unknown vocabulary in a text?

Yes, I can. Similarly, as in the listening activities, I presented the learners the unknown vocabulary by showing Power Point presentations, and teaching the correct pronunciation of each word. Moreover, I distributed some texts and asked the learners to highlight the words studied in previous classes. Afterwards, I checked the answers by asking the students to read the words aloud.

7. Can I evaluate and select a variety of post-reading tasks in order to provide a bridge between reading and other skills?

Yes, I can. Post-reading tasks are very useful for ESL learners because they strengthen the learners' comprehension skills. The importance of post-reading activities is described below:

After reading activities help students to locate and record relevant information; support students to make connections with what they know and between texts; provide a framework for summarizing key ideas within a text; support students to make inferences and generalizations; help students to substantiate or reconsider their own ideas (Pysarchyk and Yamshynska, 2015, p. 80).

Teachers should make the most of the reading tasks by creating activities so that the students practice other language skills. The integration of the four skills has been an essential part of the communicative approach. Regarding the integrated-skill approach:

English language teaching as a second or foreign language can be viewed as a tapestry, where the four primary skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) are the strands that need to be interwoven in positive ways to produce a large,

strong, beautiful tapestry (Oxford 2001, as cited in Rahaman and Akhter ,2017, p. 33).

In a similar way, other authors highlight the advantages of the integrated –skill approach:

The integrated skill approach, as contrasted with the purely segregated approach, exposes English language learners to authentic language and challenges them to interact naturally in the language. Learners rapidly gain a true picture of the richness and complexity of the English language as employed for communication (Oxford, 2001, p.5).

8. Can I recommend books appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners?

Yes, I can. When teaching reading to children, fairy tales are very useful because they are very appealing to kids. They can practice their second language skills while they have fun. In relation to advanced learners, it is recommended to use novels for since they provide linguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge. For instance, the Charles Dickens' literature works refer to the Victorian Age in which the author describes the poverty and the social inequality that existed in England during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

9. Can I help learners to develop critical reading skills (reflection, interpretation, analysis, etc)?

Yes, I can. For instance, I can get the learners to read an article about *the advantages and disadvantages of living in the countryside* and identify the point of view of the author. Then, the students share their opinions and discuss the author's view. Finally, I can implement activities in which learners write compositions or prepare oral presentations about this matter.

## E. Grammar

1. Can I introduce a grammatical item and help learners to practice it through to meaningful contexts and appropriate texts?

Yes, I can. When teaching grammar, teachers should know that learners need time to become familiar with the structures of the target language and integrate grammar with other aspects of language. Larsen-Freeman (2001) states that “learning is a gradual process involving the mapping of form, meaning and use; structures do not spring forth in learners’ interlanguage fully developed and error-free.(p.255). Concerning the concept of pedagogical grammar, and following the same idea expressed above “grammar teaching needs to be supported and embedded in meaning-oriented activities and tasks, which give immediate opportunities for practice and use (Mitchell, 2000 as cited in Fotos ,2001, p.276). In my practicum, I taught beginners the present simple tense by showing them real-life situations, e.g., people introducing themselves , greeting others, talking about their hobbies and occupations, etc. Then, I assign tasks for learners practice grammar with other skills. As Cameron (2001) states “In structuring activities the goal is to help learners internalise the grammatical pattern so that it becomes part of their internal grammar”. (p. 116).

2. Can I introduce and help students to deal with, new or unknown items of grammar in a variety of ways (teacher presentation, awareness-raising, discovery, etc)?

Yes, I can teach grammar in different ways. For example, I can teach a grammar rule by giving brochures, using the board, showing videos and slide presentations. Also I can assign in-class and out-class activities for promoting practice. Likewise, I should integrate grammar with the four skills (Reading, writing, speaking, and listening).

3. Can I deal with questions learners may ask about grammar, and if necessary, refer to appropriate grammar reference books?

Yes, I can. As a teacher, I should prepare lessons about grammar and try to anticipate the aspects which learners can struggle with. I can refer to grammar books in order to look up explanation and activities to use in the classroom. In relation to coursebooks, Halliwell (1992) points out that coursebooks help teacher by providing a source of content to teach and material for classwork. Furthermore, textbooks help learners by offering them security, and a sense of progress. (p 113)

4. Can I use grammatical metalanguage if and when appropriate to the learners' needs?

Yes, I can. It is unavoidable to teach the structure of language without using the terminology related to it. Therefore, SL teachers should make learners become familiar with this specialized words when is necessary to focus on the form of the target language. For example, when I introduced adjectives to the learners, I explained that these type of words are used to describe people or things, e.g., the clown is funny, the, John is tall, etc.

5. Can I evaluate and select grammatical exercises and activities, which support learning and encourage oral and written communication?

Yes, I can. The students need to integrate grammar knowledge with other language skills. During my practicum, , I had the learners practice the verb *to be* and *the present simple tense* by writing sentences related to daily routines, e.g., *I wake up at 6 am, I have breakfast at 9 am*. Likewise, learners practiced greetings and introductions by means of role plays, oral drills, etc.



## F. Vocabulary

1. Can I evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to learn vocabulary?

Yes, I can. In my practicum, I implemented some activities in the classroom such as drawing, pasting, guessing, etc. The children had fun at the same time they learned vocabulary related to different topics. For example, the students learned the song called "*head, shoulders, knees and toes*" in order to study the parts of the human body.

2. Can I evaluate and select activities which help learners to learn new vocabulary in oral and written contexts?

Yes, I can. When I taught seventh graders during my practicum, the learners studied vocabulary and expressions related to daily routines by performing tasks that help them to develop the four skills. Regarding the integration of these skills, Cameron (2001) suggest, that "when studying a word, it is necessary to know how it is written, how it is spelt, how it sounds, its grammar changes, and its meaning.(p 78)

3. Can I evaluate and select activities which enhance learners' awareness of register differences?

Yes, I can. It is important to raise awareness about these language variations. I can use both oral and written texts in order to show the learners how language changes depending on the situation. For instance, we can notice linguistic differences among a friends' conversation, a newspaper article, an email sent to relatives, a work letter, etc.

## G. Culture

1. Can I evaluate and select a variety of texts, source materials and activities which awaken learners' interests in and help them to develop their knowledge and understanding of their own and the other language culture (cultural facts, events, attitudes and identity, etc)?

Yes, I can. Teachers should raise awareness of the cultural values related to the target language by implementing classroom activities that help learners to identify such connection. According to Snow (2007) "Study of culture and intercultural communication should be included in language courses because it can enhance students' ability to understand and interact effectively with people from other cultures and more effectively express themselves to foreign audiences." (P. 199).

2. Can I create opportunities for learners to explore the culture of target language communities out of class? (Internet , emails, etc).

Yes, I can. For example, the learners can search information on internet about the American culture and then carry out writing and oral tasks about what they found. Learners can use materials like movies, songs, novels, to study these cultural values.

3. Can I evaluate and select a variety of texts, source materials and activities which make learners aware of similarities and differences in sociocultural 'norms of behavior'?

Yes, I can. For instance, some literature works and movies reflect to a great extent, the cultural values and beliefs of the English speaking countries. Therefore, the students can perform communicative tasks based on the cultural information reflected in these materials.

4. Can I evaluate and select activities (role-plays, simulated situations, etc.) which help learners to develop their socio-cultural competence?

Yes, I can. Some activities like role plays and drama may help students to practice their speaking skills as well as the socio-cultural competence. Learners can practice their second language skills by simulating situations of the real life, e.g. acting out a phone call, ordering a meal in a restaurant, buying something in a store, etc.

5. Can I evaluate and select a variety of texts, source material and activities to help learners to reflect on the concept of 'the otherness' and understand different value systems?

Yes, I can. evaluate and select activities which encourage learners to reflect on other cultures, views, beliefs, lifestyles, etc. For example, I can have learners carry out speaking and writing tasks about controversial topics, e.g., abortion, politics, racism, etc. Also, I can have learners develop their comprehension skills by reading or listening to texts regarding people' opinions, experiences, etc.

6. Can I evaluate and select text, source materials and activities to make the learners aware of stereotyped views and challenge these?

Yes, I can. I am able to have the learners study texts in order to analyze stereotyped views. For example, I would have the learners watch the movie *American History X*. The plot is about two brothers who are involved in a Neo-Nazi organization. These racist ideas cause death to one of them. The pupils could write essays, or perform speaking activities about this topic.

7. Can I evaluate and select activities which enhance the learners' intercultural awareness?

Yes, I can. I would use different types of material in order to raise awareness about the different cultures, traditions, and beliefs across the world. I can implement in-class activities for the learners to practice enhance their multicultural competence such as oral presentations, discussion, role-play, etc. Also, I can have the pupils write summaries about literature works since they reflect a lot of socio cultural aspects related to the target language, .e.g., *The adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Oliver Twist*, *Hamlet*, etc.

8. Can I evaluate and select a variety of texts and activities to make learners aware of the interrelationship between culture and language?

Yes, I can. Language and culture are connected each other. Regarding this relationship, "A language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture." ( Brown, 2000, p.177, as cited in Choudhury, 2013, p 21). For instance, I can introduce the topic American celebrations, and have students talk about the differences and similarities between the American and Colombian traditions.

### **5.2.3. Resources**

1. Can I identify and evaluate a range of course books/ materials appropriate for the age, interests and the language level of the learners?

Yes, I can. During my practicum, I used some textbooks at the beginning of the course, but I noticed that the learners were confused with the content of the books. In consequence, I decided that I need to adapt these materials to the learners' language level. For instance, I talked about people that the learners knew like football players, singers, actors, etc.

2. Can I select those texts and language activities from course books appropriate for my learners?

Yes, I can. Regardless of the topics and activities that I select from a textbook, I need to adapt them to the learners' knowledge. For instance, in my practicum, I prepared the learners before the activities by introducing them vocabulary, explaining sociolinguistic aspects, teaching grammar, etc.

3. Can I locate and select listening and reading materials appropriate for the needs of my learners from a variety of sources such as literature, mass media and internet?

Yes, I can. Nowadays, teachers can count on the ICT (information and communication technology) which is an useful resource for teaching a second language. The advantage of using these technological gadgets is that they catch the attention of the students. In most cases, learners are motivated when they learn language through technology. Furthermore, the ICT is suitable for different type of learning, e.g, visual and aural learners.

4. Can I make use of ideas and materials included in teachers' handbooks and resource books?

Yes, I can. Resource books such as journals, magazines, etc, are helpful for educators since they guide them and provide ideas to improve their teaching. These materials are based on action research, theories and studies with the aim to shed light on aspects related to teaching such as lesson planning, classroom management, etc. These handbooks contribute to teachers' professional development.

5. Can I design learning materials and activities appropriate for my learners?

Yes, I can prepare materials and tasks according to the age, language proficiency, and students' learning style. During my practicum when I taught first graders, I designed activities suitable for children like drawing, songs, games etc. The children could have fun at the same time they learned. In contrast, when I taught teenagers, I implemented tasks according to their interest such as sports, music, etc.

6. Can I recommend dictionaries and other reference books useful for my learners?

Yes, I can. The dictionaries on line are a very good option for learners to study language because they offer meaning, phonetic transcription, and some examples. Also, there are many websites for second language learning such as La Mansión del Inglés, BC Learning English, etc which are valuable resources to promote autonomous learning through which learners of all levels can develop their linguistic and communicative skills.

7. Can I guide learners to produce materials for themselves and for other learners?

Yes, I can. For instance, learners can produce oral presentations by creating flashcards, posters and brochures. In activities like role play or dramatizations, I can encourage the students to make customs, puppets, decorations, etc.

8. Can I select and use ICT materials and activities in the classroom which are appropriate for my learners?

Yes, I can use ICT materials as long as the school has the infrastructure and resources required. Learning a foreign language through internet, video, audio recording, etc is very productive for learners since they can practice autonomously. Learning by using these technological instruments is fun for the students and it is suitable for different styles of learners.

9. Can I design ICT materials and activities appropriate for my learners?

Yes, I can design ICT activities suitable for my learners based on their age, and language proficiency. For instance, I would have children use the application *Hot Potato* because it offers fun activities like puzzles, crosswords, word-order exercises, etc. On the other hand, computer programs like *Tell me More* can be suitable for advanced learners because they can practice vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, etc.

10. Can I guide learners to use the internet for information retrieval?

Yes, I can. The Internet provides a lot of resources for second language learners. For example, there are many helpful websites such as ESLvideo.com, RealEnglish.com, Englishvid.com, etc, which offer materials and activities like songs, games, videos, quizzes, and so on.

11. Can I use and critically assess ICT learning programs and platforms?

Yes, I can. ICT learning programs and platforms are very handy resources for teachers to assign homework, provide learning materials, assess learners, give information, etc. For example, during my degree, some teachers used *Schoology*. It is a very good platform and I would use it as a language instructor.

#### **5.2.4. Lesson planning**

##### **A. Identification of learning objectives**

1. Can I identify curriculum requirements and set learning aims and objectives suited to my learners' needs and interests?

Yes, I can. These learning aims are like a map for teachers because they guide educators during the students' learning process. Then, I have to adapt the content of the

course to the learners' knowledge, language level, learning style, etc. Based on the achievement indicators, teachers have a clearer view to assess the students.

2. Can I plan specific learning objectives for individual lessons and / or a period of teaching?

Yes, I can. For instance, in my practicum, I planned lessons about topics such as greetings, giving personal information, and introductions. The learners were expected to perform tasks that help them to develop the four skills through in-class activities. The time scheduled for meet these goals was two weeks.

3. Can I set objectives which challenge learners to reach their full potential?

Yes, I can. I should promote practice and autonomous learning. Also, I can provide learners with appropriate strategies for studying a second language. For instance, the students can form study groups, use the ICT, search on internet, carry out out-class activities. In addition, learners need to be aware of the benefits of getting exposed to the target language as much as possible.

4. Can I set objectives which take into account the differing levels of ability and special educational needs of the learners?

Yes, I can. During my practicum, I had to adapt learning material to teenage group. They belonged to a "Caminar program" which was part of an educative policy of the Colombian state, and it was aimed at preventing scholar dropouts. So, I had to plan classes suitable for them, according to their age and knowledge. At the beginning of the course, I spoke in Spanish in order to have a rapport with them and show the benefits of learning English as a second language.



5. Can I decide whether to formulate objectives in terms of skills, topics, situations, linguistics systems, (functions, notions, forms, etc)?

Yes, I can decide what to teach and how to do it depending on the learning context. When I taught young children, during my guided practicum, I not only had to cope with the age of the learners, but also I dealt with the shortage of teaching resources in the school. Consequently, I had to design my own materials such as flashcards, pictures, etc. I decided to teach vocabulary related to topics they already knew in Spanish such as family, animals, classroom etc. Also, I decided have them perform individual tasks with the purpose of controlling discipline. They misbehave when I tried to group them. The methodology employed was basically task -based instruction, e.g. coloring, drawing, matching, writing exercises, etc.

6. Can I set objectives which encourage learners to reflect on their learning?

Yes, I can promote self-reflection by means of feedback. Learners need to be aware of their learning process by knowing their strengths and weaknesses. In addition, It is important that students become active learners, and not just recipients of information. The facilitators should create the conditions for learner- centered classes where the students take risk to participate in the lessons.

## **B. Lesson content**

1. Can I structure lesson plans and/ or plan for periods of teaching in a coherent and varied sequenced of content?

Yes, I can. When I taught children in my practicum, I divided the course into thematic units such as: classroom objects, family, animals, the human body, etc. Since the kids were illiterate, I focus on speaking. So, I introduced vocabulary to them with the help of images, and gestures. Likewise, they solved worksheets in order to be

familiar with the English alphabet. For example, the aim of the first lesson was to learn vocabulary related to the classroom, e.g, teacher, student, board, notebook, etc.

2. Can I vary and balance activities to include a variety of skills and competences?

Yes, I can. As a teacher, I have to prepare lessons aimed at developing all the learners' SL skills including grammar, and cultural awareness. In addition, I should integrate all these competences. In my practicum, I introduced the occupation topic by having students perform varied tasks like watching videos, listening audio recordings, performing games and mimicry activities.

3. Can I plan activities to ensure the interdependence of listening, reading, writing and speaking?

Yes, I can plan activities in which learners practice the four skills. For instance, I can start out the class with a listening task and move on to a reading activity related to the same topic. Afterwards, I can promote speaking and writing tasks for the learners to express their opinions about the themes studied in class.

4. Can I plan activities to emphasize the interdependence of language and culture?

Yes, I can. The Information related to culture provides the opportunity for learners to develop their competences and language skills by means of discussion, oral presentations, written tasks, etc. When we analyze fragments of a foreign language, we find aspects linked to their beliefs, attitudes, food, customs, etc. Thus, becoming bilingual does not only imply to acquire a new system of communication, but also the ability of recognizing different ways to live.

5. Can I plan activities which link grammar and vocabulary with communication?

Yes, I can. Students should acquire new vocabulary and grammar by analyzing texts in which language is used for meaningful communication. For instance, when reading a text, the learners study words and grammatical items, and, at the same time, they assimilate the function of these terms. In other words, they learn where and when is appropriate to use these words. i.e. pragmatic competence.

6. Can I plan to teach elements of other subjects using the target language (Cross-curricular teaching, CLIL, etc)?

Yes, I can implement content classes in order to enhance learners' second language skills. In doing so, I have to focus on both content and the target language. For instance I can plan lessons about natural sciences where most of the time the language used is descriptive and the present simple tense and present perfect are used. Regarding history, it refers to events occurred in the past, so learners simultaneously practice the grammatical items involved in this subject matter.

6. Can I identify time needed for specific topics and activities and plan accordingly?

Yes, I can. for instance if I am going to plan a warming – up activity, for example, a fun task which relax and prepare learners for the rest of the lesson, song, games, a kinesthetic activity, etc it is recommended to last five minutes. Then, the rest of the activities can last from 10 to 15 minutes depending on the complexity of the task. However, I should keep in mind unexpected events and anticipate them for example, students' questions, or situations relating to classroom management like controlling discipline or grouping which are time consuming.

7. Can I design activities to make the learners aware and build on their own knowledge?

Yes, I can. For example, in my autonomous practicum I had learners writing sentences about their preferences, their hobbies, their families, their friends, etc. Also, after showing examples about information of famous celebrities in the world, e.g. famous football players, actors, singers, etc, the pupils had to write information about other celebrities selected by them.

8. Can I vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners' motivation and interest ?

Yes I can. In my practicum, teaching both children and teenagers, I used games and fun activities like mimicry, lottery, role-plays, songs, etc. So, the students showed interest to participate. I really noticed that their second language skills improved when they felt pleased with the lesson. Besides, I showed them funny videos related to topics dealt with in the class, e.g. daily routines, adjectives, etc, in order for them to enhance their receptive skills.

9. Can I vary and balance activities in order to respond to individual learners' learning?

Yes, I can. In my classes, I observed the differences that students had in terms of learning. For instance, some learners respond well to group work others did better in individual tasks, so I let them decide the way to work. Moreover, some learners needed my support during the tasks whereas others were independent learners. Some learners learned faster than others, in consequence I had to monitor those who need more assistance.

10. Can I take on board learners' feedback and comments and incorporate this in future lessons?

Yes, I can accept suggestions from the students. It is a good signal that they are involved with the classes, and that they are conscious of their learning process. I consider it very positive and that helps teachers to enrich their profession and to have a better relationship with their students. Also, learners' contribution to the teaching process can help them to enhance their language skills if their ideas are expressed through the target language.

11. Can I involve learners in lesson planning?

Yes, I can. That would be very productive and meaningful for the development of learners' second language skills. I would do so for some classes in which I could have them list the topics they like to study, and the type of activities they like to perform. It is a good way to raise awareness among the learners about their learning process and promote active learning. For example, the learners can decide what song they would like to listen to the following class in order to study vocabulary and grammar. Likewise, they can recommend materials like texts, videos, etc.

### **C. Lesson Organization**

1. Can I select from and plan a variety of organizational forms (frontal, individual, pair, and group work) as appropriate?

Yes, I can arrange the classroom according to the activity that I want to implement. For instance, if I want the students to develop their speaking skills by discussing or sharing ideas, I have to promote pair or group work. Also, I can have the whole class participate in discussion by organizing the chairs in circle shape. Likewise, If I want to

promote individual work or making the students present a written test, I can arrange the seats in vertical rows.

## 2. Can I plan for learner presentations and learner interaction?

Yes, I can. Indeed, learners' presentations and interaction help students to reduce their affective filter and become risk taker when speaking. Besides, when learners speak in front of the class, they can support their ideas with pictures and written information with the purpose of practicing other skills. Apart from the advantages in terms of language learning, interaction is helpful to create a relaxing environment in the classroom and strengthen the rapport among teachers and learners.

## 3. Can I plan when and how to use the target language, including meta language I may need in the classroom?

Yes, I can. I think that the target language should be used most of the times in the classroom because it brings great benefits to students in terms of learning. the use of metalanguage is suitable for grammar explanations where students need to become familiar with the structure of the language and the parts which it is made out of.

## 4. Can I plan lessons and periods of teaching with other teachers and/or student teachers (team teachers, with other subject teachers, etc)?

Yes, I can meet other student teachers in order to share some ideas, and discuss about methodologies and techniques that they usually employ. The information that I can collect from them may be helpful for me in lesson planning. Also, if I want to conduct a content lesson I can receive advice from those teachers who have experience in that

area. CLIL teachers can give me valuable recommendations for me to put into practice in the classes.

### **5.2.5. Conducting a lesson**

#### **A. Using lesson plans**

##### **1. Can I start a lesson in an engaging way?**

Yes, I can. During my practicum, I tried to create activities in order to catch the attention of the learners and get them to be interested in the classes. At the beginning of each lesson I designed warning up activities which prepared the students to what they were going to study during the class. Additionally, I attempted that the task was both amusing and didactic for the pupils. For example, in my practicum with 6<sup>th</sup> graders, I planned the next activity for the warming up: The teachers will have students act out some daily routines. The volunteers who pass in front of the class will take out some small pieces of paper from a bag. Each paper will contain a sentence related to a daily routine which will have to be enacted by the learners.

##### **2. Can I be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses?**

Yes, I can. During my practicum with first graders, I assigned drawing activities in order to have learners practice vocabulary. After they drew an object, they had to write its corresponding word. However, they wanted to color it too. Therefore, I allowed them to do so. On the other hand, when teaching 6<sup>th</sup> graders, I adapted the content of the

coursebooks which were based on the British lifestyle to the Colombian context the students were familiar with.

3. Can I ensure smooth transitions between activities and tasks for individuals, groups and the whole class?

Yes, I can achieve that especially with teenagers. I could manage that situation working with the sixth graders. On the other hand, when teaching children, I only had them work individually because it was the best way to control their misbehavior and I took so long trying to group them. In my experience with teenagers, it was easier to plan tasks for them to work by their own, in groups, and the whole class.

4. Can I adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situation occur?

Yes, I can. In the pedagogical practice, I had to alter what I planned for the lesson because of unexpected events such as disruptions, learners' indiscipline, overhead projector or computer' failures, etc. Therefore, I had to shorten the time assigned for some activities or postpone them for the following lesson.

5. Can I time classroom activities to reflect individual learners' attention span?

Yes, I can time activities taking into account the learners' attention span. When I taught children, I tried to give them short and clear commands. Most of the activities that children did were related to fun activities such as drawing, coloring, etc. Consequently, they enjoyed these tasks a lot and tended to take from 10 to 15 minutes. Regarding the sixth graders, I used to take 5 minutes at most to give instructions related to the lesson. Some activities that I planned for them lasted 5 minutes while other could last 15 minutes depending on the difficulty of the tasks.



## 6. Can I finish off a lesson in a focused way?

Yes, I can. At the end of the lesson, I can make a review of the class, by eliciting the students to check what they learned after the lesson. Also, I can allocate time to clarify doubts, explain grammatical items, etc. Moreover, It is an appropriate time to assign homework to the learners and give them the necessary instructions about how to do it.

## **B. Content**

### 1. Can I present language content (new and previously encountered items of language, topics etc.) in ways which are appropriate for individuals and specific groups of learners?

Yes, I can. During my practicum I had learners study language through topics like greetings, introducing yourself, family, occupations, etc. The selection of the themes was according to the age and language level of the learners; for instance, when teaching children I focused on vocabulary related to aspects that they already knew in their mother tongue such as colors, animals, occupations. In regard to older learners I could introduce more complex topics and include the study of grammatical items.

### 2. Can I relate what I teach to learners' knowledge and previous language learning experiences?

Yes, I can. It is important that teachers know the different learning style, the learners' previous information and cultural background. In my practicum, I taught both children and teenagers; so, I needed to adapt the lessons to their characteristics and needs as learners. At the beginning of the practicum, I wrongly based the classes on the coursebooks which contain descriptions of Anglophone cultures that they did not know. Then, I realized that I need to teach them language based on the Colombian context.

Obviously, I could not overlook to teach significant aspects of the target culture and compare them with our culture.

### 3. Can I relate what I teach to current events in local and international contexts?

Yes, I can. When I taught the 6<sup>th</sup> graders, I showed them a video in which they could learn some facts related to Britain such as its currency, the pound, and some cities like London, Edinburgh, Brighton, Oxford, etc. Also, I presented information about famous football players, e.g. Juan Cuadrado plays for the Italian club Juventus, he is 29 years old, etc.

### 4. Can I relate the language I am teaching to the culture of those who speak it?

Yes, I can. In my practicum. I habitually put examples based on the Colombian context in order to explain topics or situations related to the English language study. For example in teaching the verb *to be*, I could ask the learners to say where they are from, so they could respond from Pereira, Dosquebradas, etc. Likewise, they can say in which neighborhood they live. E.g. "I live in Boston district", "I live in Cuba district", etc.

## **C. Interaction with learners**

### 1. Can I settle a group of learners into a room and gain their attention at the beginning of a lesson?

Yes, I can by using resources like ICT so that the learners can watch videos and slide presentations, listen to mp3 files, etc. these resources are appealing to them and

facilitate their learning. Also, in my practicum, I implemented games and fun activities for children like drawing, coloring, mimicry and songs.

2. Can I keep and maximize the attention of learners during a lesson?

Yes, I can keep and maximize the learners' attention by eliciting them about aspects related to topics they know, promoting reflection and discussion about debated issues. Similarly, I can deal with matters of their interests and ask them to produce language based on those topics they like. E.g. sports, movies, music, friends, family, etc.

3. Can I be responsive and react supportively to learner initiative and interaction?

Yes, I can be attentive to the learners' attitudes towards the course and their learning process by attending their questions, suggestions. Also, I should promote ongoing interaction by implementing discussion activities regarding the course, or topics dealt with during the lessons. e.g. learners can talk about their favorite places to visit on holidays, their hobbies, etc

4. Can I encourage learner participation whenever possible?

Yes, I can. In fact, I should try to create conditions for having learner-centred classes, in which the students participate all the time, and actively learn. In teaching teenagers and adults I can promote the development of high order thinking skills, by implementing critical reading, and reflections about the materials they study like books, videos or audio files.

#### 5. Can I cater for a range of learning styles?

Yes, I can. In my practicum I had to face different learning styles and attitudes towards learning. Some learners liked to work by their own; others preferred to work in groups. Regarding children, they enjoyed individual work in which they expressed their creativity like in drawing activities. When teaching teenagers, they excelled in games, and kinesthetic activities. Most of the learners who I taught preferred the visual aids in learning such as videos slides, and flashcards. Some of them were very talkative and did well in oral participation. Others were introverted and need to be stimulated for me to talk.

#### 6. Can I make explicit and help learners to develop appropriate learning strategies?

Yes, I can. When teaching vocabulary, I implemented reading activities so that learners can review the new words by highlighting them in the texts. In listening activities, I helped them by using images and gestures. Also, in the pre-listening tasks, I explained them the context and I emphasize about the importance of analyze the images before listening to the aural text.

### **D. Classroom management**

#### 1. Can I take on different roles according to the needs of the learners and requirements of the activity (resource person, mediator, supervisor etc.)?

Yes, I can. During my practicum I had to take on different roles such as motivator, prompter, feedback provider etc. Most of the times I had to control discipline, especially with the children. However, the best way to control their hyperactivity is canalizing their

enthusiasm to the benefit of learning by implementing engaging task that keep them busy, e.g. lottery games, crosswords, matching activities, etc.

2. Can I create opportunities for and manage individual, partner, group and whole class work?

Yes, I can. When I taught children I liked to keep them occupied by implementing individual tasks that they enjoyed a lot. On the other hand, when I conducted classes for teenagers, I could vary the way of grouping them. I assigned pairwork or in groups if I wanted to have them practice speaking and discussing about a specific topic. Also, I promoted whole- class participation by eliciting students to talk about they know. Individual work was very useful when I had them read texts.

3. Can I make and use resources efficiently (flashcards, charts etc.)?

Yes, I can. When I taught first graders during my practice I could not work with ICT such as video projectors, computers, internet etc. Thus, I had to create my own pedagogical resources like flashcards and pictures. I could draw appealing images for the children in order to teach vocabulary such as animals, classroom objects, etc. They stimulated kids to speak when I elicited them to do it. Also, I could implement other activities by using pictures such as guessing, puzzles, etc.

4. Can I manage and use instructional media efficiently (OHP, ICT, video etc.)?

Yes, I can. In my pedagogical practice, I had the support of technological gadgets such as an OHP and a computer. These tools helped me to teach language effectively because I could introduce topics in an appealing way and draw the learners' attention. Moreover, the ICT are time-saving and suitable for different style of learning. They can fit to any pedagogical activity such as listening, reading, etc.

5. Can I supervise and assist learners' use of different forms of ICT both in and outside the classroom?

Yes, I can assign homework to students by means of the ICT. The learners can practice their listening skills through internet by watching videos, listening to podcasts or visiting websites where grammar items are explained and can be practiced. for example; there are interesting websites such as *la mansion del inglés*, *BBC learning English*, etc.

### **E. Classroom language**

1. Can I conduct a lesson in the target language?

Yes, I can. In my practicum with both children and teenagers, I spoke to the learners in English most of the time. However, I used Spanish when I needed to give complicated instructions for them to understand in the target language. Also, when I had to admonish the students because of their misbehavior or when I needed to get their attention.

2. Can I decide when it is appropriate to use the target language and when not to?

Yes, I can. Most of the scholars and EFL teachers recommend using the target language as much as possible in the classroom. I used the L2 progressively during my practicum because the learners were beginners. In the first class I spoke in Spanish in order to introduce the ground rules to the students. Also, I used the learners' mother tongue when teaching difficult concepts of grammar to them.

### 3. Can I use the target language as metalanguage?

Yes, I can. During my practice, I used English in order to review a grammar lesson that I had introduced before in Spanish. In doing so, I employed both pictures and gestures to support the explanation. Also, I used to code-switch from L2 to L1 as a resource to explain grammar.

### 4. Can I use various strategies when learners do not understand the target language?

Yes, I can. When learners do not understand the target language I can use body language, realia, pictures, code-switching, and as a last resource, the translation from L2 to L1. Moreover, I think that to speak in English in the implementation of routines or predictable tasks during the lessons help the learners become familiar with the target language.

### 5. Can I encourage learners to use the target language in their activities?

Yes, I can promote the use of the target language in the classroom through activities in which the students put into practice their productive skills such as oral presentations, discussion, role play, debate, etc. Likewise, I can foster the development of the learners' writing abilities by means of stories, essays, creative writing, etc.

### 6. Can I encourage learners to relate the target language to other languages they

speak or have learned where and when this is helpful?

Yes, I can. Since I taught to Spanish speakers, most of the times I took advantage of their L1' skills. For example, when I conducted the classes for first graders, they already knew a lot of words in Spanish despite they had not developed their literacy skills yet. Therefore, I could easily contextualize some topics by using the pupils' mother tongue. E.g. I used Spanish to elicit the learners to talk about their family, colors, classroom objects, animals, etc.

### 5.2.6. Independent learning

#### A. Learner autonomy

1. Can I evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to reflect on their existing knowledge and competences?

Yes I can. I can achieve that especially when teaching both teenagers and adults because of their cognitive skills. They can produce language based on their knowledge and experiences. For example, they can express their ideas in writing tasks such as essays, stories. Similarly, I can promote reflection through speaking activities. e.g. debate, discussion etc.

2. Can I evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to identify and reflect on individual learning processes and learning styles?

Yes, I can. I can select activities in which the learners reflect on their strengths and aspects to improve through feedback after they perform their tasks. During my practicum with sixth graders I corrected the works that they did in class and encouraged them to do better as their learning process advanced.

3. Can I guide and assist learners in setting their own aims and objectives and in planning their own learning?

Yes, I can. I think that it is easier to assist learners in setting their own aims, especially when teaching adults because they are conscious of their learning and they are willing to improve the way they learn. Therefore, I can guide them to monitor their progress and set their own goals based on their skills, learning style and study pace. It is important to promote autonomy and self-evaluation in the learners by encourage them to



allocate time to study at home and taking advantage of the benefits that ICT offer to learners.

4. Can I evaluate and select tasks which help learners to reflect on and develop specific learning strategies and study skills?

Yes, I can provide learners with strategies to cope difficulties when reading, listening, etc. For example, in reading activities, I should tell learners to highlight the keywords they find in the text, and focus on the meaningful details in order for them to have the main idea of the reading. When teaching writing I can promote the use of outlines, brainstorming, mindmaps, etc with the purpose of stimulating creative writing. Likewise, when learners are practicing speaking, I can give students valuable hints for them to bear in mind, for example to pay attention to intonation to convey meaning.

5. Can I assist learners in choosing tasks and activities according to their individual needs and interests?

Yes, I can. I should assign tasks after evaluating the learners' needs and finding out their strengths and weaknesses. For instance in my practicum with sixth graders, I decided that they need to practice more the conjugation of the verb to be. Therefore, I gave them worksheets in order for them to solve grammar exercises. Also, they watched a video in which the conjugation was explained in the target language. So, the learners could practice their listening skills too.

6. Can I help learners to reflect on and evaluate their own learning processes and evaluate the outcomes?

Yes, I can. Since I taught children and teenagers, it was very challenging make them reflect on their learning process. They do not have maturity to make self-assessment. However, I can get students to do it by having them correct their own tasks and promoting peer assessment. "Often used as a learning tool, peer assessment gives students feedback on the quality of their work, often with ideas and strategies for improvement. At the same time, evaluating peers' work can enhance the evaluators' own learning and self-confidence" ("Peer Assessment", nd, para 2).

## **B. Homework**

1. Can I evaluate and select tasks most suited to be carried out by learners at home?

Yes, I can. For example I can give worksheets to the learners in order for them to work at home. Also, I can give them links to websites in order for them to practice their second language skills by watching videos, listening to podcasts or solving grammar exercises on the internet.

2. Can I set homework in cooperation with learners?

Yes, I can. I think that an effective way to promote learning autonomy is to allow the students to choose the tasks they like to perform according to their preferences and learning style. For example, they can select a song in order to be played in the classroom, or choose a topic that they would like write about.

3. Can I provide necessary support for learners in order for them to do homework Independently and assist them with time management?

Yes, I can. When assigning a homework to the students, I should ensure that they assimilated the input during the lesson before they start to practice. Also, I have to present an example of the activity, and explain the purpose of doing it. Moreover, I should give clear instructions to the students and the hints required for them to succeed in carrying out the task.

4 .Can I assess homework according to transparent and valid criteria?

Yes, I can. As teacher I should assign and assess tasks according to the learners' needs and language learning level. According to Cameron (2001), "a task that is going to help the learner learn more language is one that is demanding but not too demanding, that provides support but not too much support" ( p 27).

### **C. Projects**

1. Can I plan and manage project work according to relevant aims and objectives?

Yes, I can. Once the goals related to the project work have been established, and assuming that I divide the whole class into groups for each project, I can plan sessions with the students in order to guide them and negotiate the terms in which each group will perform their work, and to know in depth the details of each project and how the learners progress as the course advances.

2. Can I plan and organize cross-curricular project work myself or in cooperation with other teachers?

Yes, I can. For example if a project involves knowledge of other subject matters such as history, geography, biology, statistics, etc it is necessary to rely on the cooperation of the instructors specialized in those areas in order for the learners can receive instruction and guidance in the production of the projects.

3. Can I assist the learners in their choices during the various stages of project work?

Yes, I can. I should support the learners' initiative and encourage them to be creative in their works. I can make suggestions in terms of materials, methodology and

other aspects for them to keep in mind in their projects in order to facilitate and guide their work.

4. Can I encourage learners to reflect on their work (diaries, logs etc.)?

Yes, I can. I think that the objective of promoting project works is to make learners reflect on how this sort of tasks help them improve their second language skills and think about the importance of interacting with their classmates with the aim of enhancing their knowledge and second language skills.

5. Can I help learners to use relevant presentation tools?

Yes, I can. The presentation of the project is important in order to share the outcomes with the whole class. "Projects need to be seen, read and admired so schedule the last project session as a presentation. Ask the group to prepare a task for the others in the class to do connected to the project". ("Project work with teenagers", nd) Nowadays there are a lot of useful presentations tools which most of students are familiar with .e.g. Power Point, Prezi, Movie Maker, etc.

6. Can I assess the process and outcome of project work in cooperation with learners?

Yes, I can. When assessing the task throughout all the process I should exchange views with the student's .The learners must be willing to receive feedback during the production of the project. In addition, I should be receptive and open minded to the learners' suggestions that lead to successfully meet the goals set for the project work.

## **D. Portfolios**

1. Can I set specific aims and objectives of portfolio work (for coursework, for Continuous assessment etc.)?

Yes, I can set specific objectives of portfolio work. When I taught first graders during my practicum, I asked them to keep all their tasks organized in a folder with the purpose of having evidence of their work in class and monitoring their progress throughout the course. Portfolios are a useful assessment tool for teachers. Moreover, they promote students' self assessment and motivation for learning.

2. Can I plan and structure portfolio work?

Yes, I can. In my practicum, I assessed the students' classwork at the end of the course by checking and grading the tasks that they collected in portfolios. I implemented activities suitable for children like drawing, coloring, pasting cut-out images, etc. Obviously, the goal of each task was assessing language learning. For example, the kids drew a clown and indicated the parts of his body in English. e.g., head, eyes, mouth, etc.

3. Can I supervise and give constructive feedback on portfolio work?

Yes, I can. When I assessed the first graders I asked them to give me the tasks they had performed during the class in order to check them, correct mistakes and provide feedback. Since I taught basic words related to different topics such as classroom objects, colors, animals, etc the kids habitually made errors in spelling. Thus, I wrote the correct words in the worksheets they gave me to check and I returned them to the pupils.

4. Can I assess portfolios in relation to valid and transparent criteria?

Yes, I can. Portfolio work must be according to the learners' age, proficiency level and measure the knowledge and skills that the pupils have acquired during the course. For example, when I taught first graders I checked the portfolio based on the children's learning skills. I should not assign them tasks beyond their skills.

#### 5. Can I encourage self- and peer assessment of portfolio work?

Yes, I can. I can foster both self-assessment and peer-assessment when teaching older learners who have the ability and cognitive skills to do so. Providing feedback to them is easier since they can reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Likewise, they can interact with each other in order to fruitfully exchange experiences about their language learning.

### **E. Virtual learning environments**

#### 1. Can I use various ICT resources (email, web sites, computer programs etc.)?

Yes, I can. I used ICT during my autonomous practicum with 6<sup>th</sup> graders. I drew on power point presentations, videos from YouTube, web sites from which I downloaded several didactic resources like flashcards, worksheets, songs, etc. Likewise, I could count on a OHP and computer to facilitate the students' learning. I remember that the learners enjoyed some videos that I showed them. For example, the video titled *Getting up late for the dentist* It was very useful for the learners to practice daily routines. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lacjiYGj9l4>

#### 2. Can I advise learners on how to find and evaluate appropriate ICT resources (web sites, search engines. computer programs etc.)?

Yes, I can. On the internet there are countless web sites and resources which are very helpful for second language learning such as BBC Learning English, engVid, etc. Similarly, I can recommend students to use valuable software to practice English. e.g. Tell me More, Hot Potatoe, El Gran Caco, etc.

3. Can I initiate and facilitate various learning environments (learning platforms, discussion forums, web pages etc.)?

Yes, I can. I can upload videos on youtube and allow students to participate with comments and questions. Also, I can create blogs, or use learning environments on platforms like Schoology, Moodle, Google classroom, etc. These resources facilitate learning and promote autonomous learning.

## **F. Extra-curricular Activities**

1. Can I recognize when and where the need for extra-curricular activities to enhance learning arises (learner magazines, clubs, excursions etc.)?

Yes, I can. Extra-curricular activities enrich second language learning by promoting the development of social skills and intercultural awareness. Also, they provide new and refreshing environments for learning out of the classroom. In addition, extra - curricular activities can integrate language with other skills and knowledge such as art, culture, technology, sports, etc.

2. Can I set aims and objectives for school trips, exchanges and international?

cooperation programs?

No, I cannot. I have never experienced this situation.

3. Can I help to organize exchanges in cooperation with relevant resource persons and institutions?

No, I cannot. I have never carried out this kind of activities.

4. Can I evaluate the learning outcomes of school trips, exchanges and international cooperation programs?

No, I cannot. I have never participated in this kind of activities.

### **5.2.7 Assessment of learning**

#### **A. Designing assessment tools**

1. Can I evaluate and select valid assessment procedures (tests, portfolios, self assessment etc.) appropriate to learning aims and objectives?

Yes, I can. During my practicum, I decided to exclusively assess the first graders through portfolios because I could check their learning progress by evaluating the artifacts that they produced in class. On the other hand, I assessed the sixth graders by means of quizzes, tests and class participation.

2. Can I negotiate with learners how their work and progress should best be assessed?



Yes, I need to share the terms of the assessment with the students and provide them informative talks related to the competences and the achievement indicators that they must meet at the end of the term. For example, in my practicum, I told the learners that I was going to assess all your in-class activities; therefore, they needed to collect their papers in a portfolio.

3. Can I design and use in-class activities to monitor and assess learners' participation and performance?

Yes, I can. In my practicum, I used to assess the learners' knowledge and language skills by eliciting vocabulary, grammar knowledge, etc. Furthermore, I implemented fun and productive activities like guessing games, mimicry, songs, puzzles.etc. I tried hard to get learners practice the four skills. e.g. listening to CD's, watching videos, reading stories, role play and discuss activities.

## **B. Evaluation**

1. Can I identify strengths and areas for improvement in a learner's performance?

Yes, I can. Teachers should perceive the learners' attitudes and aptitudes for second language learning with the purpose of making decisions that benefit the learning process. When I taught the sixth graders group, I noticed that some learners excelled in oral participation in class, and others were very good at solving worksheets activities. So, I praised students to continue doing so and improve in other areas.

2. Can I assess a learner's ability to work independently and collaboratively?

Yes, I can. Learners must evidence skills for Individual and collaboratively work either in class or out of it. In my practicum, I could observe that some students had

difficulties with independent work and they did not follow instructions. Thus, I had to guide them to succeed in the tasks and improve their strategies for learning. Also, I thought that I need to improve my way of giving instructions and get them to be more attentive to the classes. Concerning collaborative work, I fostered group activities in which the pupils could interact and develop their social skills and respect for otherness.

3. Can I use the process and results of assessment to inform my teaching and plan learning for individuals and groups (i.e. formative assessment)?

Yes, I can. The process and results of assessment are a diagnostic instrument for teachers to make decisions about teaching. In my practicum, after I had the learners' take a test, I decided to change aspects related to content and methodology. For example, I realized that they had problems with verb *to be*. Besides, they struggled with listening conversations with native speakers. Consequently, I had to emphasize on grammar tasks about the verb *to be* and I decided to implement live listening in the classroom.

4. Can I present my assessment of a learner's performance and progress in the form of a descriptive evaluation, which is transparent and comprehensible to the learner, parents and others?

Yes, I can show what standards I used to assess learners for each competence. For example, when evaluating oral performance, I should design a grading scale and its corresponding criteria, e.g. fluency, pronunciation, use of vocabulary, etc. Also, I can add an analytic scale for each criterion. e.g. "score 0, the candidate cannot get words or phrases out at all. (Harmer, 2001, p 330).

5. Can I use appropriate assessment procedures to chart and monitor a learner's progress (reports, checklists, grades etc.)?

Yes, I can. I think that checklists and analytic scales are suitable for assessing production skills such as speaking and writing. Indirect test items fit more to assess grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension skills, e.g. multiple choice questions, cloze tests, true-false questions, etc.

6. Can I use assessment scales from the Common European Framework of Reference?

Yes, I can assess learners based on the standards proposed for the CEFR. They are useful criteria for teachers to guide their lessons and assess the learners' outcomes. In Colombia, teachers of primary and secondary education follow the standards proposed by El Reto which in turn mirrors the assessment scales of the Common European Framework of Reference.

7. Can I use a valid institutional/national/international grading system in my assessment of a learner's performance?

Yes, I can. In my practicum, I had to use a qualitative grading system in order to assess the learners' outcomes since it has been a policy of the Ministry of Education of Colombia, e.g., Excellent, outstanding, acceptable, insufficient, and poor. I used this system to make summative assessment at the end of the term in which the practicum lasted.

8. Can I assign grades for tests and examinations using procedures which are reliable and transparent?

Yes, I can. Besides using a qualitative grading system required by the Ministry of Education, I assigned grades to the learners according to a numerical scale from 0 to 5.

I used this scale to make formative assessment. For example, I prepared tests to students and I assessed them on the basis of the number of items solved by them. Also, when I assessed children I graded their activities in class according to the completeness of them. For instance, a learner was expected to write the corresponding word to 5 pictures of animals. Every correct word was worth a 1 point. Therefore, the grade corresponded to the total of points gained by the learner.

### **C. Self- and peer assessment**

#### **1. Can I help learners to set personal targets and assess their own performance?**

Yes, I can. I think that teachers should always instill in learners autonomous learning and self-assessment. When the students are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, it is easier for them to create strategies, make plans and set goals that lead to better outcomes during their learning process.

#### **2. Can I help learners to engage in peer assessment?**

Yes, I can implement activities in the classroom in order to facilitate peer assessment. For example, peer response is very used for writing assessment.

“When students write for their peers, they become very concerned about what they say and how to say it. Students may not be as skilled as their teachers at responding to each others’ work. But, they are excellent in providing the one thing that writers need most-an audience. (Peñaflorida, 2002, p. 351)

#### **3. Can I help learners to use the European Language Portfolio?**

Yes, I can. The ELP is a document that guides learners to record their outcomes and check their progress in second language learning. In this way, learners can make

self-assessment and be conscious of their learning process. Therefore, this document is an efficient instrument to promote autonomous learning.

#### **D. Language Performance**

1. Can I assess a learner's ability to produce a spoken text according to criteria such as content, range, accuracy, fluency, appropriacy of register etc.?

Yes, I can assess learners' speaking skills by setting a set of rubrics that inform the students on what they need to take into account in order to be competent speakers in the target language. e.g. fluency, intonation, knowledge of the topic, etc. Before assessing learners, I should provide learners with the necessary input, i.e. I have to show examples of spoken language, and promote activities for them to practice pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary, etc

2. Can I assess a learner's ability to produce a written text according to criteria such as content, range, accuracy, cohesion and coherence etc.?

Yes, I can. During the course I should get learners to become familiar with different types of texts, style of language, genre, etc. Likewise, I can make pupils practice the required skills such as spelling, grammar, etc , through self-assessment and peer assessment activities in which the students feel motivation and take ownership of their learning.

3. Can I assess a learner's ability to understand and interpret a spoken text such as listening for gist, specific or detailed information, implication etc.?

Yes, I can. During my practicum I trained the learners in order for them to gain progressively the necessary skills to interpret spoken texts. For example, I implemented dictations and live listening. For example, I read out some texts in class before getting

them exposed to native speakers conversations. Thus, the students were familiar with the items they need to master e.g, listening for gist, and details, etc, when they presented a listening test.

4. Can I assess a learner's ability to understand and interpret a written text such as reading for gist, specific or detailed information, implication etc.?

Yes, I can. I should promote activities aimed at developing learners' abilities for interpreting written texts. For example, I can implement individual or group work tasks by having students reading short texts with the purpose of determining the main idea, and detailed information. In the practicum I implemented intensive reading activities in which the students identified general and specific information.

5. Can I assess a learner's ability to engage in spoken interaction according to criteria such as content, range, accuracy, fluency and conversational strategies?

Yes, I can implement in-class activities such as role play, discussion, oral presentation, etc aimed at having learners practice their speaking skills in the target language. Furthermore, the interaction between teacher and learners and among the students also can promote the enhancement of the oral competence in L<sub>2</sub>. I should make sure that learners get to know the criteria through which they are going to be assessed and provide them with models of spoken language.

6. Can I assess a learner's ability to engage in written interaction according to criteria such as content, range, accuracy and appropriacy of response etc?

Yes, I can. I have to provide learners with models of written language such as letters, e-mails, postcards, etc. After I give examples to the learners, they can have a lot of practice. Besides teacher assessment, the students can check their progress through self assessment and peer response activities

## E. Culture

1. Can I assess the learners' knowledge of cultural facts, events etc. of the target language communities?

Yes, I can. The students can learn a lot of cultural aspects at the same time they learn a second language. Most of the coursebooks and materials which are used for second language learning contain texts that reflect the lifestyle of the target language community. Therefore, I should assess how much the learners can understand these cultural facts and how they use this knowledge when practicing their L2 skills.

2. Can I assess the learners' ability to make comparisons between their own and the culture of target language communities?

Yes, I can. Making comparison between L1 and L2 culture is an opportunity for the learners to enhance their second language skills. For example, I can have learners write compositions to compare the Colombian holydays with the American or British celebrations. Also, the learners can be involved in discussion, debate, etc aimed at distinguishing the two cultures.

3. Can I assess the learner's ability to respond and act appropriately in encounters with the target language culture?

Yes, I can. Learners should acquire the sociolinguistics skills that help them to use effectively their second language skills in real situations. To achieve that it is necessary to know the culture of the target language. For example, during my practicum, I had the learners listen to conversations that showed different ways to greet people, e.g. people use greetings such as *hello*, *hi* when greeting friends, and they use terms like Mister, Madam, Miss, when addressing to unfamiliar people.

## **F. Error analysis**

1. Can I analyze learners' errors and identify the processes that may cause them?

Yes, I can. When teaching beginners, one of the greatest problems that learners have is first language interference. Thus, I need to anticipate this issue and teach learners the rules that govern the second language in terms of structure, syntax, pronunciation, etc.

2. Can I provide constructive feedback to learners concerning their errors/interlanguage?

Yes, I can. Learners' errors normally occur when they try to say something but they cannot express it correctly and they start floundering. Therefore, teachers should assist them and tell the correct words to them. In the same way, they can write incorrectly. For example, in my practicum, the sixth graders made spelling and word order errors. Consequently, I proofread their tasks.

3. Can I deal with errors that occur in class in a way which supports learning processes and communication?

Yes, I can. It is normal for SL learners to make errors during the learning process. Therefore, the teacher should analyze them to make decisions that lead to correcting these flaws. For instance, in my practicum, the students' errors about the conjugation of the verb *to be* make me implement more tasks to have learner work harder this grammar item.

4. Can I deal with errors that occur in spoken and written language in ways which support learning processes and do not undermine confidence and communication?



Yes, I can. When learners attempt to speak in the second language, it is common that they make pronunciation errors or do not know what to say. Therefore, teacher should act as prompters by remind learners the correct sound or word. It is important that instructors do not blame the students when making errors. Instead, the learners should be encouraged to continue participating. Likewise, when correcting written errors, teachers should inform learners what the errors are without discouraging them. For example, most of language instructors use symbols to indicate writing errors, e.g, *w.o*, to indicate that there is a word order error in the sentence. *Sp*, refers to a spelling error, etc.

## 6. Conclusions

The development of the EPOSTL document helped me think about my process of learning as future teacher of languages. It was an instrument to reflect on a several areas related to teaching such as context, resources, methodology, etc. Since my experience as teacher has been limited, the document encouraged me to make self-assessment about my didactic knowledge and skills in my practicum, and helped me to anticipate situations which I could face in the future as a second language teacher.

In regard to the personal statement, I reflected on my experience as language learner and how it could influence my way of teaching. When I was studying in high school, the English instructors focused on grammar most of the time. Consequently, I could not develop enough ability to communicate with others in real situations. For that reason, in the personal statement I said that I would not stick to the structure of language exclusively, but I would make students learn through meaningful activities. However, I should accept that grammar cannot be ignored when teaching language. As Thornbury (1999) suggests “Grammar is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences” (p.2). However, language teaching has evolved over time to combine both form and meaning in order to present a wider perspective of language. (Littlewood, 1981).

At the self-assessment section, I could think about the competences that I have to develop as educator. Regarding the descriptors, Newby et al, (2007) point out that “it is important that they act as a stimulus for students, teacher educators and mentors to discuss important aspects of teacher education which underlie them and that they contribute to developing professional awareness.” (p 87).

Concerning the effect that the EPOSTL had on my personal growth, I could reflect on how my personal strengths and weaknesses can affect my way of teaching. Teachers should be patient, reflexive and friendly in order to have a good relationship with their students and create an appropriate environment for learning.

Summarizing, the EPOSTL is not only a useful instrument for those who undertake language teacher education, but also it is a valuable tool for professional development and continuing self-assessment. In addition, it promotes discussion between students and their mentors and among the educational community.

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